



# **U.S. Department of Homeland Security (DHS)**

## **Language Access Plan**

**February 28, 2012**

- 1. Purpose**
- 2. Scope**
- 3. Key Terms**
- 4. Policy**
- 5. DHS Language Access Roles and Assignments**
- 6. Background**
  - a. Joint Language Task Force**
  - b. Component Self-Assessment**
  - c. External Stakeholder Input**
  - d. Current and Future Language Services and Activities**
- 7. Resources**
- 8. Contact Information**
- 9. Appendix: Components' Activities and Plans:**
  1. U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP)
  2. DHS Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman (CISOMB)
  3. DHS Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL)
  4. Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
  5. National Protection and Programs Directorate, Federal Protective Services (FPS)
  6. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE)
  7. DHS Office of Public Affairs (OPA)
  8. Transportation Security Administration (TSA)
  9. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS)
  10. U.S. Coast Guard (USCG)
  11. U.S. Secret Service (USSS)

## **1. Purpose**

This Language Access Plan implements DHS's language access policy and establishes a system within DHS to implement [Executive Order 13166, Improving Access to Services for Persons with Limited English Proficiency](#) (LEP) (August 11, 2000), which requires, among other things, that each Federal department and agency "examine the services it provides to LEP persons and develop and implement a system by which LEP persons have 'meaningful access' to those services without unduly burdening the fundamental mission of the agency." In addition to describing DHS's current language access activities, the plan includes steps to improve and increase language services for LEP individuals in operations, services, activities, and programs across DHS.

In a 2011 [Memorandum](#) regarding the Federal Government's Renewed Commitment to Language Access Obligations under Executive Order 13166, the Attorney General explained that language access requirements serve two functions: nondiscrimination and effective government. "Whether in an emergency or in the course of routine business matters, the success of government efforts to effectively communicate with members of the public depends on the widespread and nondiscriminatory availability of accurate, timely, and vital information. Swift and accurate communication with the general public is critical during major disasters and public-health emergencies. Consequently, an agency should ensure that LEP individuals have meaningful access to disaster-preparedness and emergency information."

The Executive Order establishes both procedural and substantive requirements:

Substantively, DHS must provide meaningful access to its programs, services, and activities to those with limited English proficiency, consistent with and without unduly burdening the Department's fundamental missions. This obligation may, in varying circumstances, be met by provision of written materials in multiple languages, or by routine or specially-arranged interpretive or non-English services.

Procedurally, the Executive Order requires DHS to prepare a plan to improve access to its federally conducted programs and activities by eligible LEP persons—that is, to develop and implement this Language Access Plan. It also requires DHS to issue guidance to recipients of DHS financial assistance, assisting such organizations and entities to understand their corresponding language access obligations under the national origin nondiscrimination provisions of Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and implementing regulations. DHS issued the required recipient guidance in April 2011, *DHS Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons* ([DHS Recipient Guidance](#)), 76 Fed. Reg. 21755-21768, (April 18, 2011).

## **2. Scope**

This DHS Language Access Plan establishes DHS language access policy to set standards, operating principles, and guidelines to govern the delivery of language services to ensure

meaningful access to programs, services, and activities by LEP individuals.

It also provides for the development, in Fiscal Year (FY) 2012, and finalization, in FY 2013, of DHS Component Language Access Plans to serve as management documents to outline and define Component tasks, set deadlines and priorities, assign responsibilities, allocate resources necessary for implementation and compliance with language access requirements, and explain to employees how to access and deliver language services to LEP persons encountered.

The DHS Language Access Plan applies to all DHS Components that interact with members of the public via any medium, including, but not limited to, websites, email, phone, and in-person contact. Although some DHS Components are not explicitly referred to in this plan, each Component is responsible for following this plan to the extent it provides programs, services, and activities to the public and has contact with LEP individuals.

### **3. Key Terms**

- a) **Limited English Proficient Persons:** Persons who do not speak English as their primary language and who have a limited ability to read, speak, write, or understand English.
- b) **Bilingual Persons:** Persons who are bilingual are fluent in two languages and are able to conduct the business of the workplace in either of those languages. This is to be distinguished from proficiency in more than one language. An individual who is proficient in a language may, for example, be able to greet an LEP individual in his or her language, but not conduct agency business in that language. Interpretation and translation require the interpreter to be fluently bilingual, and also require additional specific skills as described below in (c).
- c) **Interpretation and translation:** Interpretation involves *oral* communication. Translation involves *written* communication. Interpretation involves the immediate communication of meaning from one language into another. An interpreter conveys meaning orally, as a result, interpretation requires skills different from those needed for translation. Interpreting is a complex task that combines several abilities beyond language competence in order to enable delivery of an effective professional interpretation in a given setting. From the standpoint of the user, a successful interpretation is one that faithfully and accurately conveys the meaning of the source language orally, reflecting the style, register, and cultural context of the source message, without omissions, additions, or embellishments on the part of the interpreter.

Professional interpreters are subject to specific codes of conduct and should be trained in interpretive skills, ethics, and subject-matter language. DHS Components utilizing the services of interpreters should request information about certification, assessments taken, qualifications, experience, and training.

Interpreters may be physically present, or, in appropriate circumstances, may appear via videoconferencing or telephonically. When videoconferencing or telephonic interpretation are used, options include connecting directly to a specific professional interpreter with known qualifications, or using a company that provides telephonic interpretation services and has in place quality control and privacy safeguards.

If bilingual staff is asked to interpret or translate, staff should be qualified to do so. Assessment of ability, training on interpreter ethics and standards, and clear policies, as noted below, that delineate appropriate use of bilingual staff, or contract interpreters and translators, will help ensure quality and effective use of resources.

## **4. Policy**

**It is the policy of DHS to provide meaningful access for individuals with limited English proficiency to operations, services, activities, and programs that support each Homeland Security mission area by providing quality language assistance services in a timely manner. DHS Components, therefore, should incorporate language access considerations into their routine strategic and business planning, identify and translate crucial documents into the most frequently encountered languages, provide interpretive services where appropriate, and educate personnel about language access responsibilities and how to utilize available language access resources.**

The DHS Recipient Guidance and other Federal agency guidance on LEP include a four-factor analysis that assists in assessing meaningful access. These factors are the:

- 1) Number or proportion of LEP individuals encountered or likely to be encountered;
- 2) Frequency of contact with LEP individuals;
- 3) Nature and importance of the program, activity or service provided; and
- 4) Resources available and costs to provide the meaningful access.

The provision of meaningful access often begins with this assessment but must be accomplished by taking proactive steps, including (1) providing the necessary language assistance services; (2) training staff on policies and procedures; and (3) providing notice of language assistance services.

The primary goal of this policy and plan is to provide meaningful access to vital DHS programs, benefits, and services, and to maintain effective and protective law enforcement and other operations by communicating effectively with LEP individuals in languages other than English. In carrying out this policy, DHS Components must identify and employ cost effective strategies and leverage DHS and other Federal government resources.

## **5. DHS Language Access Roles and Assignments**

*Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties.* Under DHS Delegation 3095, CRCL is responsible for providing guidance and oversight for implementing the provisions of Executive Order 13166 and this Language Access Plan. To ensure consistency and accountability across the agency, CRCL will, among other things:

- 1) Chair the DHS Language Access Working Group to coordinate efforts to implement the provisions of this DHS Language Access Plan. Among other things, the Working Group will develop proposed agency-wide standards for ensuring quality assurance of

language services, serve as a clearinghouse of best practices and opportunities for leveraging resources across DHS, and research and disseminate information on existing language technologies and the appropriate use of these technologies.

- 2) Monitor and coordinate DHS Component and Office language access activities.
- 3) Provide ongoing technical assistance to Components in the development of their Language Access Plans.
- 4) In accordance with CRCL complaint processing procedures, review complaints filed by members of the public that allege a denial of meaningful language access to DHS's programs, services, and activities, and if appropriate, make recommendations to remedy deficiencies.
- 5) Support Component and Office efforts to train their managerial and front-line employees on language access responsibilities and protocols.
- 6) To augment existing language services, facilitate interagency access to existing Federal resources such as the National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC), which offers qualified translators in support of national security; the FBI's Language Services Unit, which offers language skills testing and interpreter certification; and the National Language Service Corps, chartered by Congress as part of the Department of Defense (DOD) plan to address future surge requirements and the National Security Language Initiative (NSLI).

*Office of Chief Human Capital Officer.* OCHCO supports the Language Access Plan by integrating the necessary data collection efforts into its biannual foreign language needs assessment and performing other related human resources duties associated with implementation of the plan (e.g., professional pay issue, working with unions).

*Other Components.* In FY 2012, each DHS Component (operational and support) having contact with the public is required to develop a Language Access Plan that fully incorporates the DHS LEP policy established by this plan. Component Language Access Plans must be based on the most recent self assessments. Components should submit their Language Access Plans to CRCL by August 15, 2012. CRCL will provide feedback and the plans should then be finalized by December 31, 2012.

Each Component Language Access Plan should include, at a minimum, the following elements:

- 1) **Responsible Staff:** In addition to listing a primary LEP coordinator for the Component, identify senior management staff, workgroup, committee, or other staff who will have the authority and be responsible for developing and modifying the Office or Component Language Access Plan, as well as establishing and implementing operational procedures;
- 2) **Oversight:** Establish protocols for authority and oversight;
- 3) **Notice to Employees:** Establish methods for explaining to employees their responsibilities and available language resources;
- 4) **Prioritization:** Include a plan for prioritizing language services based on importance of services or encounter, frequency of use, and demographics;

- 5) **Language Access Procedures/Protocols:** Set out the language access procedures or protocols that staff should follow to provide language services to LEP persons encountered in their daily activities, covering: recognizing the LEP status of an individual, identifying the language spoken, identifying situations requiring appropriate language assistance, accessing this language assistance, and recording the contact. Unless countervailing considerations are explained in detail, protocols should include limits on the use of family members, friends, or other persons associated with LEP persons to rare situations and nonessential information;
- 6) **Quality Control Procedures:** Describe quality control procedures that ensure staff employees who use their foreign language skills do so in an accurate and competent manner as well as to ensure high quality language services from contractors;
- 7) **Data Tracking:** Outline steps for implementing and maintaining a mechanism for collection and management of data relating to non-English needs, especially through existing databases or tracking systems;
- 8) **Resources:** Assess the resources necessary to provide language services, identifying existing resources to the extent practical and describing funding and procurement needs;
- 9) **Outreach to LEP Communities:** Describe collaboration or engagement with LEP communities and other external stakeholders to assess effectiveness of language services; describe media strategies in coordination with DHS OPA and how LEP communities can support agency efforts to provide language services;
- 10) **Employee Duties:** Where appropriate, expand job descriptions to include interpretation and translation activities within the scope of employees' duties; assess these employees' language abilities to ensure their competency to perform language services for particular duties; and describe plans for enhancing employees' language abilities;
- 11) **Timeframes:** Describe the timeframes and benchmarks for steps to be undertaken;
- 12) **Training:** Where appropriate, include a plan for managerial and front line staff training on language access responsibilities, including identifying LEP persons, accessing available language services, and working with interpreters;
- 13) **Notice to the Public:** Provide for notice of free language assistance services and points of contact for additional information; and
- 14) **Monitoring and Evaluation:** Provide for monitoring and evaluating and, if appropriate, updating the plan, policies, and procedures at a minimum every two years, including monitoring performance, quality assurance, and internal review processes as well as evaluating the impact, if any, of demographic shifts.

Without waiting for the completion of its Language Access Plan, each Component, if it has not already done so, should develop and disseminate Language Access Procedures or Protocols that explain to staff who encounter or are likely to encounter LEP individuals how to identify LEP individuals and access available language services. Components should start forwarding these procedures to CRCL immediately after the effective date of this plan. As noted above, such procedures or protocols are also one of the required elements of the Component Language Access Plan.

## **6. Background**

In order to assess and improve language access, DHS established a Joint Language Task Force (JLTF) and also conducted internal assessments and external consultation to assess the ability of the Department to meet the needs of LEP individuals and identify priorities for improvement.

### **a. DHS Joint Language Task Force**

To respond to General Accounting Office (GAO) recommendations regarding assessing foreign language needs (*DHS Needs to Comprehensively Assess Its Foreign Language Needs and Capabilities and Identify Shortfalls*, GAO-10-714 June 22, 2010), DHS established a Joint Language Task Force with representation from across DHS. The Task Force met from October 2010 to May 2011. As part of its efforts, it established a subgroup to support the creation of this Language Access Plan and made several relevant recommendations. These recommendations were that DHS should:

- Identify and promote foreign language training offered within the Department;
- Ensure that foreign language assessments are incorporated into the Department's future strategic planning, budgeting, and workforce planning activities; and
- Establish a DHS Language Access Working Group, headed by CRCL, with representation from across DHS to coordinate the activities and planning requirements for the DHS-wide Language Access Plan and individual Component and Office Language Access Plans.

### **b. DHS Component and Office Self Assessment**

CRCL developed a self-assessment survey to assist Components to assess their language needs and capabilities. Incorporating the standard four-factor analysis, the self assessment elicited information regarding:

- 1) LEP point of contact;
- 2) Mission and responsibilities;
- 3) Specific activities that require interaction with the public, such as: in-person interviews and contacts; written communication; customer service hotlines; outreach activities; screening; and law enforcement encounters;
- 4) Existing policies regarding language access;
- 5) Existing plan describing how it provides language services to eligible LEP persons;
- 6) LEP persons served or encountered;
- 7) Level of importance of programs, activities, and services;
- 8) Language services available: interpretation and translation;
- 9) Multilingual content on Internet website;

- 10) Existing plans to improve or increase access or services for LEP individuals;
- 11) Outreach and notification efforts to help ensure that messages and information reach LEP persons (e.g., use of ethnic media; collaboration with nongovernmental organizations; direct outreach to LEP populations);
- 12) Staffing and training required for employees performing language duties;
- 13) External stakeholder assessment, i.e., identifying stakeholders who may have an interest in the provisions of a DHS Language Access Plan;
- 14) Examples of language services offered that provide LEP persons with meaningful access to operations, services, and activities;
- 15) Interest in receiving training or technical assistance to improve LEP persons' access to its operations, services, and activities; and
- 16) Estimated costs for providing language services.

A review of the self-assessment survey responses indicated that most Components have taken concerted steps to provide meaningful access to LEP persons in their daily operations, services, and activities. The self-assessments highlighted a host of activities, innovative programs, and targeted strategies for reaching LEP communities throughout DHS. These efforts are described in the Appendix to this Plan. DHS personnel responding to the self-assessment and participating in the subgroup to develop this plan had vast experience and expertise in working with an enormous variety of LEP populations. They offered creative solutions for enhancing access in their own programs and each Component expressed its interest in strengthening current efforts.

### Challenges

While progress has been made, challenges remain. As part of the self-assessment, Components provided information they had on the languages of LEP persons served or encountered, but most have not tracked such data. Procedures for employee access to language services are very strong in some program areas, but weaker in others. While staff language skills are a major strength, some programs lack formal methods for ensuring the language competency of staff who use their foreign language skills in the course of carrying out their duties. The Department's focus, both in FY 2011 as this plan was developed, and in FY 2012, as the Component and Office plans are crafted, will yield important benefits in improved services and improved ability to carry out DHS's vital missions, which require communication with every segment of the American public—including the more than roughly 8% who have limited English proficiency.

The self-assessments confirmed that the non-English languages most frequently encountered vary greatly by Component and Office, and even within such divisions, by activity and region. Frequently encountered languages reported across DHS included:

Arabic  
French  
Haitian Creole  
Japanese  
Korean  
Mandarin

Portuguese  
Russian  
Spanish  
Vietnamese

Additional Asian and South Asian languages identified across several DHS Components included: Urdu, Hindi, Punjabi, Cambodian, Tagalog, Thai, and Laotian.

**c. External Stakeholder Input**

On April 7, 2011, the Officer for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties and representatives from across DHS hosted a meeting to provide external stakeholders an opportunity to provide input for this DHS Language Access Plan. The Department also received comments solicited by the White House Initiative on Asian Americans and Pacific Islanders (WHIAAPI). There were, in addition, numerous other opportunities for stakeholders to provide feedback including at CRCL community engagement events held in several cities across the country. Finally, numerous stakeholders provided written suggestions.

Across all these avenues, external stakeholders described areas in which they felt the Department should make language access improvements. Various stakeholders recommended improved language access:

- In airport security screening
- In immigration detention facilities and hold rooms
- During immigration enforcement operations
- During immigration benefits adjudication, including by providing interpreters for asylum interviews
- In the aftermath of disasters, specifically in the delivery of information and services

More particularly, stakeholders recommended that DHS and its Components:

- Engage with LEP communities in their native languages
- Elicit more LEP community stakeholder involvement in DHS programs when seeking external stakeholder feedback
- Improve language data collection efforts
- Develop training and protocols relating to use of bilingual staff as interpreters
- Provide and improve technical assistance to staff and emergency managers on effective communication with LEP persons
- Establish standards for what constitutes a vital document necessitating translation into major languages
- Institute quality control processes for interpretation and translation
- Train DHS management and staff in diversity and cultural competency

DHS considered these and other recommendations in the development of the plan and will continue to engage with external stakeholders to receive additional input on its implementation.

#### **d. Current and Future Language Services and Activities**

CRCL and the working group reviewed each self-assessment and, informed by stakeholder comments, next met with each relevant DHS Component—usually holding many meetings, involving many different programs, to discuss current activities and useful improvements. Each Component developed a description of its current activities and began to undertake its own language access planning process. As a beginning to the language access planning process, each Component began to consider, in particular, ways in which it could:

- Increase provision of interpretation and translation services as a regular part of conducting programs and operations
- Increase outreach to LEP populations to provide information on homeland security programs
- Track encounters with LEP individuals to identify current and future needs for language services
- Utilize CRCL “I Speak” materials to facilitate identification of the languages spoken by LEP persons encountered
- Limit use of family members, friends, or other persons associated with LEP persons to rare situations and nonessential information.
- Provide training and guidance to staff on language access requirements, how to access available language services, and how to work with interpreters
- Consult with external stakeholders to plan future language services.

In many cases, Components have already begun new activities and improvements. A description of existing and planned language access activities is included in the Appendix.

## **7. Resources**

Executive Order 13166 [LINK]

DHS Guidance to Federal Financial Assistance Recipients Regarding Title VI Prohibition Against National Origin Discrimination Affecting Limited English Proficient Persons (DHS Recipient Guidance) [LINK]

CRCL, Training [LINK] (Power Point) on *Language Access Responsibilities, Overview for DHS Employees*. Other training resources from CRCL forthcoming

CRCL “I Speak” Materials. CRCL has developed a set of three tools for use by DHS personnel, recipients, and partners who work directly with the public and may need to identify the language of the person with whom they are interacting: the “I Speak” Poster, Pocket Guide, and Job Aid. Upon request, the CRCL Institute will provide customized, digital versions of these tools. All three of the “I Speak” tools include more than 85 languages.

CRCL: "How To Access Demographic Data Regarding a Geographic Region's Population"

CRCL: "How to Provide Language Services During Encounters with LEP Persons"

Federal Interagency Working Group on Limited English Proficiency: [www.lep.gov](http://www.lep.gov) contains resources, tools, technical assistance, and updated information on language access activities for agencies of the Federal government, recipients, and other entities that support language access.

U.S. Department of Justice, Civil Rights Division, Federal Coordination and Compliance Section *Language Access Assessment and Planning Tool for Federally Conducted and Federally Assisted Programs*, May 2011, available at

(b)(7)(E)

[REDACTED] contains

[REDACTED] helpful guidance Components may wish to review in creating the Language Access Plans.

## 8. Contact Information

For more information about language services and related activities in DHS, members of the public may contact the Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) at [REDACTED] (b)(6),(b)(7)(C) [.dhs.gov](http://dhs.gov) or by calling the numbers below. CRCL may refer your inquiry to the relevant Office or Component for information or action.

Under 6 U.S.C. § 345 and 42 U.S.C. § 2000ee-1, CRCL reviews and assesses information concerning abuses of civil rights, civil liberties, and profiling on the basis of race, ethnicity, or religion, by employees and officials of the Department of Homeland Security. This includes information concerning denial of meaningful access to DHS programs, activities, or services due to limited English proficiency.

To file a complaint with CRCL, a member of the public may download the optional [fillable complaint form](#) and e-mail it to: [REDACTED] (b)(6),(b)(7)(C) [hs.gov](http://hs.gov), or e-mail a detailed written description of the pertinent events.

Complaints are accepted in languages other than English:

[Download the form in English \(PDF, 7 pages - 212 KB\)](#)

[Cliquez ici pour télécharger ce formulaire en français – French \(PDF – 8 pages, 234.77 KB\)](#)

[Klike la pou telechaje fòm sa a an Kreyòl Ayisyen – Haitian Creole \(PDF – 7 pages, 211.31 KB\)](#)

[Clique aqui para fazer o download deste formulário em português - Portuguese \(PDF – 8 pages, 223.98 KB\)](#)

[Ще л к нныи цвъзюд е чътъо бълг ри и в бу о р м ду ском я з ы-к е Russian \(PDF – 8 pages, 386.45 KB\)](#)

[点击此处下载本表格的中文版 – Simplified Chinese \(PDF – 7 pages, 434.82 KB\)](#)

[Halkan riix si aad u soo degsato foomkan oo af Soomaali ah – Somali \(PDF – 8 pages, 219.88 KB\)](#)

[Haga clic aquí para descargar este formulario en español – Spanish \(PDF – 7 pages, 209.31 KB\)](#)

[Bấm vào đây để tải về bản tiếng Việt – Vietnamese \(PDF – 7 pages, 292.02 KB\)](#)

More information about filing a complaint with CRCL can be found at [www.dhs.gov/crcl](http://www.dhs.gov/crcl) or by calling CRCL directly at one of the phone numbers listed below.

Other means for filing a complaint or contacting CRCL:

U.S. Postal Mail: (this method can take up to 20 business days)

Department of Homeland Security  
Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties  
245 Murray Lane, SW  
Building (b)(6);(b) Mail Stop # (b)(7)(C)  
Washington, D.C. 20528

Telephone:

Local: 202-401- (b)(6);(b)(7)(C)

Toll Free: 1-866-644-8360

Local TTY: 202-401-0470

Toll Free TTY: 1-866-644-8361

# **DHS LANGUAGE ACCESS PLAN**

## **Appendix:**

### **Component Language Access Activities and Plans**

1. U.S. Customs and Border Protection
2. Office of the Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman
3. Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties
4. Federal Emergency Management Administration
5. National Protection and Programs Directorate, Federal Protective Services
6. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement
7. Office of Public Affairs
8. Transportation Security Administration
9. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services
10. U.S. Coast Guard
11. U.S. Secret Service

## **1. U.S. Customs and Border Protection**

U.S. Customs and Border Protection (CBP) is one of the Department of Homeland Security's largest and most complex Components, with a priority mission of keeping terrorists and their weapons out of the United States. It also has a responsibility for securing and facilitating trade and travel while enforcing hundreds of U.S. statutes and regulations, including immigration and drug laws.

### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

The following are examples of ongoing activities within CBP to provide meaningful access for LEP persons.

#### **U.S. Border Patrol**

The Border Patrol's fundamental mission is to secure our Nation's borders between the Ports of Entry against all threats, including terrorists and terrorist weapons, transnational criminal organizations, and illegal immigration. The Border Patrol has an agent workforce of over 20,000, who are assigned to patrol more than 6,000 miles of America's land borders. Due to the fact that the overwhelming majority of all Border Patrol law enforcement actions resulting in an apprehension are of foreign nationals who speak the Spanish language, it is a requirement that *all* Border Patrol agents be able to communicate effectively in the Spanish language to perform their duties safely.

All Border Patrol agent trainees are tested on their Spanish language abilities soon after arriving at the academy. Those who do not pass are assigned to an 8-week Task-Based Spanish Language Training Program that begins upon successful completion of the 55-day basic Academy. Those trainees who are proficient Spanish speakers and successfully pass the test go on to report directly to their duty stations to begin Post Academy Training.

For Border Patrol encounters involving nationals who do not speak English or Spanish, the Border Patrol uses contracted over-the-phone language interpretation service available 24 hours per day for more than 150 languages.

Information posters displayed in Border Patrol hold-rooms are printed in both English and Spanish. Examples of other translated forms Border Patrol uses include the notice of rights to an immigration hearing and forms related to criminal proceedings.

#### **Office of Field Operations**

The Office of Field Operations (OFO) officers serve as guardians of the Nation's borders and protect the American public against terrorist threats. They also enforce the laws of the United States at the border, and they foster the Nation's economic security through the facilitation of lawful international trade and travel.

The CBP Office of Field Operations Inspectors' Field Manual contains a detailed section on the use of interpreters, and provides for utilization of interpreters where an alien being inspected cannot speak English well enough to understand questions fully and answer them without difficulty. The Field Manual emphasizes the importance of confidentiality; outlines

the roles of the interpreter, including remaining neutral; and sets forth ways to facilitate interpretation.

OFO utilizes employees proficient in foreign languages to provide interpretation. Commercial telephonic interpretation services are also used when staff is not available.

OFO has translated the CBP Declaration Form 6059B into sixteen languages (Arabic, Dutch, Farsi, French, German, Hebrew, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Simplified Chinese, Spanish, Traditional Chinese, and Vietnamese.)

The Model Ports Program includes improved signage and a video that contains practical information about the entry process. It is broadcast in 20 airport checkpoints to arriving travelers in English, Arabic, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin and Cantonese Chinese, Russian, and Spanish.

### **Office of Public Affairs**

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) communicates CBP's mission and operations. OPA informs the agency's chief stakeholders, the American public, through media outreach and public awareness campaigns conducted via media events, news, video and photography as well as the public website on CBP.gov, informational brochures, and a national customer service call center to address public questions and complaints. OPA also provides information to the CBP work force through an intranet site and frequent leadership messages. A quarterly magazine, Frontline, is available electronically for CBP personnel and stakeholders throughout the Nation and abroad. OPA acts as a conduit for information to and guidance from the Department of Homeland Security.

The CBP.gov webpage has a section "En Español" and a program specific webpage directed to international visa waiver travelers, which is multilingual.

The CBP Information Center is staffed by English and Spanish speaking personnel.

Other divisions within CBP, such as the Office of Air and Marine, Office of International Trade, Office of Internal Affairs, and Office of International Affairs, also encounter LEP persons. As noted above, CBP uses agents/officers or other personnel and commercial interpreter services to provide language services to LEP persons.

### **ADDITIONAL PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

In addition to completing its LEP plan in FY 2012, CBP is committed to undertaking a number of activities to increase access for LEP persons to CBP programs and services. These activities include:

CBP's **Office of Diversity and Civil Rights** will establish an LEP working group consisting of all of the program offices that perform mission critical functions that directly impact persons with limited English proficiency. This working group will be responsible for implementing the following objectives in compliance with Executive Order 13166:

Train staff on language access responsibilities:

- To complement the Inspector's Field Manual, CBP will provide law enforcement or customer service personnel training through video and other technologies on the use of interpreters during encounters with LEP individuals. Such training will emphasize competency, neutrality, and avoiding conflicts of interest by limiting the use of family members, other passengers, airline representatives, etc.

Institute a protocol for non-law enforcement or customer service personnel when LEP individuals are encountered.

- CBP will examine whether the use of contracted over-the-phone language interpretation should be incorporated across CBP.
- CBP will examine whether the practices incorporated in the Inspector's Field Manual should be implemented across CBP where over-the-phone language interpretation services are not utilized.

Distribute and use "I Speak" materials.

- CBP will distribute and/or make available the CRCL "I Speak" materials to be used nationwide especially at ports-of-entry and Border Patrol stations to assist agents in identifying languages spoken by aliens encountered.

Track languages encountered.

- CBP will consider modifying database systems to track the languages spoken during encounters, including processing during primary and secondary inspection and at Border Patrol stations.

Assess staff language competency.

- CBP will consider implementing a system to evaluate the competency and proficiency of employees who use foreign language skills to communicate in other languages but are not certified under the Foreign Language Award Program (which tests and compensates CBP employees for language skills used in connection with their duties).

Train law enforcement and customer service staff to work with interpreters.

Train bilingual staff who serve as interpreters/translators.

Prioritize translations of additional CBP documents based on use and level of importance.

Conduct outreach to LEP communities through external stakeholders; consult with stakeholders to plan future language services with the establishment of advisory groups.

CBP is also considering the use of emerging technologies to address foreign language needs.

## **2. Citizenship and Immigration Services Ombudsman**

The Citizenship & Immigration Services Ombudsman (CISOMB) supports the Department's mission to secure and manage our borders and effectively administer our immigration laws. The Ombudsman helps individuals and employers who need to resolve a problem with USCIS. The Ombudsman also makes recommendations to fix systemic problems and improve the quality of immigration services and benefits provided by USCIS. The Ombudsman is an independent, confidential, and impartial resource.

### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

The following are examples of ongoing activities within CISOMB to provide meaningful access for LEP persons.

CISOMB has developed written translations in Spanish of the instructions for the CIS Ombudsman Case Submission Form (Form DHS 7001) as well as the CIS Ombudsman informational brochure.

### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

In addition to completing its LEP plan in FY 2012, CISOMB is committed to undertaking a number of activities to increase access to LEP persons to CISOMB programs and services. These activities include:

Prioritizing the translation of additional documents, including materials about CISOMB activities and programs provided to public at outreach events.

Training staff on interactions with LEP individuals including: cultural sensitivity , how to refer LEP individuals to interpreter services, and how to access these services.

### **3. Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties**

The Office for Civil Rights and Civil Liberties (CRCL) supports the Department's mission to secure the Nation while preserving individual liberty, fairness, and equality under the law. CRCL integrates civil rights and civil liberties into the Department's activities by:

Promoting respect for civil rights and civil liberties in policy creation and implementation by advising Department leadership and personnel, and working with State and local partners.

Communicating with individuals and communities whose civil rights and civil liberties may be affected by Department activities, informing them about policies and avenues of redress, and promoting appropriate attention within the Department to their experiences and concerns.

Investigating and resolving civil rights and civil liberties complaints filed by the public regarding Department policies or activities, or actions taken by Department personnel.

Leading the Department's equal employment opportunity programs and promoting workforce diversity and merit system principles.

#### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

The following are examples of ongoing activities within CRCL to provide meaningful access for LEP persons.

CRCL has been designated by the Secretary to lead language access efforts across the Department.

CRCL led the development of the recently promulgated DHS Recipient Guidance to State, local, and other entities that receive DHS financial assistance informing them of their language access obligations under Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964 and ways to meet these obligations, as well as of this language access plan.

CRCL co-chaired the DHS Joint Language Task Force, which reviewed the Department's foreign language needs and led a subgroup of the JLTF to develop this language access plan and lay the ground work for a DHS Language Access Working Group.

To support DHS-wide implementation of Executive Order 13166, CRCL has developed "I Speak" materials (poster, pocket guide, and job aid), which include over 85 languages that can be used by DHS personnel, contractors, law enforcement partners, and recipients to identify the spoken language and obtain appropriate interpretive services.

CRCL provides interpretive and translation services as needed to members of the public interacting with the office.

- For civil rights complaint investigations, translation and interpretive services are provided through a contract services that includes both telephonic and face-to-face services. The contract also supports written translations for CRCL correspondence, print media, and other written communications.
- CRCL's civil rights complaint form, website, and telephone complaint line contain information about the availability of interpreter services. CRCL provides language access to LEP complainants from intake all the way to the end of an investigation.

- The telephone complaint line greeting is recorded in English, Spanish, Vietnamese, and Arabic and allows for members of the public who speak these and other languages to leave messages to be interpreted.
- CRCL's Community Engagement Section utilizes staff members who are proficient in various languages to provide necessary language services at its outreach events. Bilingual volunteers from the NGO community occasionally enhance our outreach efforts events.
- CRCL staff proficient in languages other than English are available to provide language support in a number of contexts in which LEP persons are encountered or served, e.g., to review contractor translations to assess whether the appropriate meaning is conveyed, during informal interactions with community members to provide general information about the office or upcoming community events. Languages spoken by CRCL staff include: Arabic, Cantonese, French, Hindi, Mandarin, Somali, Spanish, Swahili, Tamil, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

Through contract services, CRCL provides translations of documents that contain vital information for members of the public regarding civil rights and civil liberties into multiple languages.

- CRCL has translated parts of its website, including the office's mission statement and materials relating to Title VI and Executive Order 13166.
- The civil rights complaint form and detailed information on how to file a complaint is available on the website in nine languages (English, Arabic, Simplified Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, and Vietnamese).

## **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

In addition to completing its LEP plan in FY 2012, CRCL is committed to undertaking a number of activities to increase access for LEP persons to DHS programs and services. These activities include:

Working with Components on their FY 2012 language access plans.

Developing training on language access responsibilities, including when to use interpreter services and how to access these services.

Identifying effective methods for collecting and tracking the languages of callers to the CRCL customer information line and other interactions with LEP persons.

## **4. Federal Emergency Management Agency**

Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) supports citizens and first responders to ensure that as a Nation we work together to build, sustain, and improve our capability to prepare for, protect against, respond to, recover from, and mitigate all hazards.

### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

For policies regarding language access, FEMA has obligations under both the Executive Order 13166 and Section 689(e) of the Post Katrina Emergency Management Act (PKEMRA), Title VI of P.L. 109-295 (H.R. 5441).

The following are examples of ongoing activities within FEMA to provide meaningful access for LEP persons. These activities cut across FEMA's offices and divisions, involving, for example, the Office of External Affairs, Disaster Operations Division, Recovery Directorate Individual Assistance Program, and Office of Equal Rights.

FEMA has a full-time Limited English Proficiency /Additional Communication Needs (LEP/ACN) Coordinator who is responsible to ensure that the agency meets both routine and unusual interpretation and translation needs.

FEMA has numerous non-English websites:

- FEMA Spanish Website: <http://www.fema.gov/esp/>.
- Other Languages Page: <http://www.fema.gov/media/resources/languages.shtm>.
- Ready Website: [www.listo.gov](http://www.listo.gov) and other languages.
- FEMA Spanish Mobile Website: m.fema.gov/esp
- FEMA Disaster Assistance Website: [www.disasterassistance.gov/espanol](http://www.disasterassistance.gov/espanol)

HQ LEP/ACN actively and continuously translates all English content on the fema.gov into Spanish on the Spanish FEMA website. Translations of other documents are based on needs in the field after disasters are declared.

FEMA affirmatively asks customers and disaster survivors about their language access needs:

- When disaster survivors register with a National Processing Service Center (NPSC), they are greeted in both English and Spanish, and asked in which of these languages they would like to receive letters from FEMA.
- Survivors are also given the option of completing their registration over the phone or on-line in Spanish or English.
- Speakers of other languages may call FEMA's Helpline and request that their correspondence from FEMA be translated.

FEMA ensures that it is reaching out to communities in appropriate languages and using appropriate venues:

- FEMA's data contractor sends the NPSC's demographic information for counties with major disaster declarations that include languages spoken in every county, which

- enables the NPSCs to determine what resources (written materials, personnel, etc.) are needed to support the recovery mission.
- In order to ensure that disaster response is as effective as possible, for each declared disaster in which FEMA provides Federal assistance under the Stafford Act to individuals and families, FEMA's Headquarters LEP/ACN Coordinator conducts an initial language assessment using various sources, including the data from the U.S. Census Bureau and nongovernmental, community, and voluntary organizations.
- FEMA uses ethnic/foreign language media, collaborates with nongovernmental organizations and faith-based, private sector, intergovernmental affairs and congressional affairs field specialists, and conducts direct outreach to LEP/ACN populations, and social media.
- NPSC's keep historical data regarding language requirements from previous disasters (e.g. number of calls routed to Spanish language speakers, number of language line calls) to initially determine foreign language requirements.
- Field offices provide information to HQ regarding LEP/ACN populations they encounter during declared disasters.
- Documents such as public service announcements, media advisories, flyers, guides, and letters related to disaster assistance are provided in other languages.
- The Office of External Affairs maintains a list of stakeholders to include Intergovernmental, Congressional and Public Affairs.

Media advisories, press releases, flyers, guides, public service announcements, pamphlets, brochures, and letters are translated into multiple languages based on the need of the disaster survivors.

FEMA has bilingual staff:

- Spanish/English speakers at the NPSC take calls from Spanish speakers as part of their regular duties.
- Disaster Assistance Employees (DAE) exercise special language skills.

FEMA provides interpretation services through:

- Commercial telephonic interpretation services, for Individual Assistance with NPSC. The NPSCs also provide telephone and on-line services and correspondence directly to applicants in Spanish language.
- In-person interpretation services
- Use of bilingual staff (at headquarters and regional level)
- Use of contract interpreters
- Contract support for American Sign Language Interpreters
- Communication Access Real-time Translation (CART) services

FEMA translates social media messages into Spanish including: Blogs, Twitter, and Facebook messages.

In determining which programs need interpretive services the offices uses:

- Initial language assessment.

- Information from field offices.
- Historical language data recorded by NPSC.
- Language line interpretive services are always available for callers to 1-800-621-FEMA.

Translations are done by:

- Use of bilingual staff (Headquarters, Regional and Field level).
- Use of contractors.
- Translation services as part of incoming mail operations contract.

FEMA collects and tracks LEP interactions in:

- After Action Reports.
- Initial Language Assessments.
- National Processing Servicing Centers maintain historical data from previous disasters regarding language line usage and the number of applicants requesting to speak with an agent in Spanish and other languages.
- Community Questionnaires, which provide direct feedback from the community, indicate how effectively FEMA is reaching LEP/CAN communities, and highlight areas for possible improvement.

In accordance with Section 616 of PKEMRA, based on the LEP/ACN populations most commonly encountered in disasters, FEMA has identified priority languages in coordination with State and local governments. The language most frequently encountered is Spanish, which falls in Category A, followed by the languages in Category B: Arabic, Cambodian, Chinese, Haitian-Creole, French, Hindi, Italian, Japanese, Korean, Laotian, Russian, Tagalog, Urdu, and Vietnamese, and Category C: Greek, Polish, Thai, Portuguese, and American Sign Language. FEMA is guided by this and its local assessments of the LEP populations in planning for language services it will provide.

## **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

In addition to updating its LEP plan in FY 2012, FEMA is committed to undertaking a number of activities to increase access for LEP persons to FEMA's programs and services. These activities include:

General improvements for language access

- Train staff on language access responsibilities.
- Distribute and use "I Speak" materials, which assist customers in expressing their language needs, to employees in high public contact positions, in Joint Field Offices, etc.
- Ensure quality assurance for language services.

### **Interpretation**

- FEMA will implement a process for establishing language competency of employees to perform specific duties.
- Train staff to work with interpreters.
- Document interpreter usage.
- Institute policy limiting use of family members, friends, or other persons associated with LEP person, to rare situations and nonessential information.

### **Translations**

- Prioritize translations of important documents.

### **Outreach**

- Consult with stakeholders to plan future language services.
- Further tailor media distribution lists.

### **Website development:**

- Further develop “Other Languages” page by storing more disaster-related content that has been translated.
- Develop a database with all previously translated materials including: flyers, press releases, and guides for re-use.

## **5. National Protection and Program Directorate, Federal Protective Service**

The Federal Protective Service (FPS) provides integrated security and law enforcement services to federally owned and leased buildings, facilities, properties and other assets.

### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

The following are examples of ongoing activities within FPS to provide meaningful access for LEP persons:

All FPS Law Enforcement Officers (LEOs) have 24/7 access to communication centers if they encounter a person with limited English proficiency.

FPS currently utilizes a translation service that is available to all LEOs.

LEOs are made aware of this capability as part of initial trainings on the function of the communication centers. Post orders direct Protective Security Officers to call the communications center for this type of assistance.

### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

In addition to completing its LEP plan in FY 2012, FPS is committed to undertaking a number of activities to increase access to LEP persons to FPS programs and services. These activities, which include contract personnel, include:

General improvements for language access:

Train staff on language access responsibilities.

Institute a protocol for staff when LEP individuals are encountered.

Distribute and use "I Speak" materials.

Track languages encountered: FPS will create a tracking database to identify language access usage in FY12.

Ensure quality assurance for language services.

Interpretation:

Assess staff language competency.

Train staff to work with interpreters.

Train bilingual staff who serve as interpreters/translators.

Enhance employees' foreign language abilities.

Document interpreter usage.

Institute policy limiting use of family members, friends, or other persons associated with the LEP Person, to rare situations and nonessential Information.

Translation:

Prioritize translations of important documents.

## **6. U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement**

U.S. Immigration and Customs Enforcement (ICE) is DHS's principal investigative arm and the second largest investigative agency in the federal government. Created in 2003 through a merger of the investigative and interior enforcement elements of the U.S. Customs Service and the Immigration and Naturalization Service, ICE now has more than 20,000 employees in offices in all 50 states and 47 foreign countries.

### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

The **ICE Homeland Security Investigations (HSI)** directorate is a critical asset in the ICE mission, responsible for investigating a wide range of domestic and international activities arising from the illegal movement of people and goods into, within and out of the United States. HSI investigates immigration crime, human rights violations and human smuggling, smuggling of narcotics, weapons and other types of contraband, financial crimes, child exploitation, cybercrime and export enforcement issues, and other violations of customs law. ICE HSI special agents conduct investigations aimed at protecting critical infrastructure industries that are vulnerable to sabotage, attack or exploitation. In addition to criminal investigations, HSI oversees the agency's international affairs operations and intelligence functions. HSI consists of more than 10,000 employees, including 6,700 special agents assigned to more than 200 cities throughout the United States and 47 countries around the world.

HSI provides interpretations using either contracts or language skills of bilingual employees.

- Use of family members, friends, or other persons associated with the LEP person is rare and only for nonessential information. In investigations such as human trafficking, friends, family, associates, and others found on the scene are never used to provide interpretation.
- HSI is compiling a database of employees who self-identify their language skills.
- HSI staff interpretations/translations are collateral duty assignments that may result in the employee receiving a cash award. In many cases, in order to be eligible for a foreign language cash award, employees are tested and certified under International Language Roundtable standards.

HSI translates notices, forms, and documents based on need to translate as conveyed by a case agent.

- For example, the Statement of Rights is translated into Spanish.

HSI reaches out to the public in non-English languages:

- HSI's *Hidden in Plain Sight Campaign* against human trafficking, ran newspaper advertisements in Spanish, Thai, Mandarin, and Korean in 2010; total readership was over five million. Public service announcements and human trafficking indicator cards are also available in different languages.
- HSI Victim Assistance Coordinators work with nongovernmental organizations and community based service providers to ensure that applicable victims' rights are relayed and services are provided to victims with limited English proficiency.

- On September 1, 2011, the International Student Exchange Visitor Program's (SEVP) micro-site aimed at attracting foreign students to the United States went live in 5 languages; by March 2012, it will be available in multiple other languages.

**Enforcement and Removal Operations (ERO)** enforces the Nation's immigration laws in a fair and effective manner. It identifies and apprehends removable aliens, detains these individuals when necessary and removes illegal aliens from the United States. This unit prioritizes the apprehension, arrest and removal of convicted criminals, those who pose a threat to national security, fugitives and recent border entrants. ERO also encounters individuals seeking asylum. ERO transports removable aliens from point to point, manages aliens in custody or in an alternative to detention program, provides access to legal resources and representatives of advocacy groups and removes individuals from the United States who have been ordered to be deported.

ICE Health Service Corps (IHSC), within ERO, provides medical care and public health services to individuals in the custody of ICE. IHSC provides direct care to approximately 15,000 detainees housed at designated facilities throughout the Nation. It oversees medical care provided to an additional 17,000 detainees housed at non-Corps staffed detention facilities across the country.

The National Detention Standards and Performance Based National Detention Standards set policy for communicating with detainees who are LEP and specifically state when information must be provided to a detainee in a language or manner they can understand.

During the admission process detainees are provided with a National Detention Handbook and orientation materials, in English and Spanish, detailing detainee rights and responsibilities. Interpretative services may also be provided to detainees who do not speak the languages of orientation materials.

ERO has implemented mechanisms to provide detained aliens with appropriate translation and interpretation services consistent with detention standards.

- Detention standards require that language services be offered in all detention facilities—Service Processing Centers (SPC), Contract Detention Facilities (CDF), and Inter-Governmental Service Agreement (IGSA) facilities—in areas such as admission, medical, classification, the grievance system, legal rights group presentations, telephone access, transfer of detainees, and visitation.
- ICE personnel have access to telephonic interpretation services to facilitate communications with apprehended and detained LEP aliens. These services are available and utilized for medical consultations, during the book-in process, and for other important communications between ICE staff and aliens.
- IHSC, which has a database of translated forms, has customized the CRCL "I Speak" materials for use by health care providers in detention facilities and will be distributing these at its facilities across the country. These materials were customized to assist IHSC employees and contract personnel.

The Online Detainee Locator System (ODLS) is a public system available on the Internet that allows family members, legal representatives, and members of the public, to locate

immigration detainees who are in ICE detention. The ODLS can be found at [www.ice.gov/locator](http://www.ice.gov/locator). The website is available in English, and translated into eight other languages: Arabic, Spanish, French, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Vietnamese, and Simplified Chinese.

ICE has translated many of the forms used during removal proceedings, including: Notice of Custody Determination, Notice of Rights, Voluntary Departure, Notice to Appear, Warrant of Arrest, Warrant of Deportation, Notice of Institution Disciplinary Panel Hearing, and Parole Advisal. Each of these is available in Spanish, Simplified Chinese, Arabic, French, Korean, and Vietnamese.

ERO conducts outreach to LEP community groups and leaders, through various NGOs.

The **ICE Office of Professional Responsibility (OPR)** upholds the agency's standards for integrity and professionalism. As a key part of that responsibility, OPR investigates allegations of misconduct involving employees of ICE and CBP.

OPR investigates misconduct allegations based upon the following criteria:

- Allegations that, if true, would constitute violations of State or Federal criminal law; or
- Allegations of misconduct that, if true, would jeopardize or undermine the agency's ability to perform its mission.

In cases of potential misconduct, OPR prepares reports of its investigations for possible judicial or management action. OPR also provides independent reviews of ICE programs and offices, adjudicates ICE background investigations and issues security clearances for all prospective and current ICE employees and contract staff. Finally, OPR oversees ICE detention functions, ensuring that facilities adhere to the agency's detention standards. OPR uses both commercial interpretation services and bilingual employees for language needs, such as interviewing LEP detainees. As in HSI, OPR bilingual employees are tested and certified.

Both OPR's Office of Detention Oversight and its 287(g) Inspections Unit inspect detention facilities and 287(g) programs for compliance with language requirements.

**ICE Office of Public Affairs (OPA)** works closely with ethnic media, including Spanish media, to communicate ICE's policies.

## **ADDITIONAL PLANNED ACTIVITIES**

In addition to developing a LEP plan in FY 2012, ICE is committed to undertaking a number of activities to increase access to LEP persons and strengthen communication with LEP persons encountered. These include:

Training staff on language access responsibilities and resources

- ICE will provide training and other resources related to language access requirements, including how to work with interpreters, to be distributed to officers/agents. The end goal will be to include language access training on the ICE Virtual University (VU), and to post related materials on an ICE intranet library.

Instituting protocols for staff when LEP individuals are encountered, including how to identify the language spoken by a LEP person encountered and how to access available language services.

Creating a civil rights training module for 287(g) officers. Agreements with State and local law enforcement agencies granted immigration enforcement authority pursuant to Section 287(g) of the Immigration and Nationality Act require that participating law enforcement agencies must provide an opportunity for subjects with limited English language proficiency to request an interpreter. Officers designated under such agreements are required to document interpreter use.

- CRCL is working with ICE to create a civil rights training module for 287(g) officers. Language access will be covered in the training module, and participants will be provided with best practices for their law enforcement agencies and for individual officers. Guidance will be provided regarding when interpreters should be used, and will cover various situations, including discussions of legal forms, voluntary departure, and whether an individual is a victim that may be protected under the Immigration and Nationality Act.

Ensuring distribution and use of "I Speak" materials

- "I Speak" materials will be distributed to all relevant ICE programs (e.g., ERO, HSI, OPR) for use when literate LEP persons are encountered in the field and the language spoken is unknown to the agent/other ICE personnel.

Prioritizing translations of additional important documents.

Incorporating in HSI Enforcement Plans, as a standard item, information on languages spoken other than English by aliens against whom enforcement actions are planned and methods for providing language services during the enforcement activity.

ICE OPR, in coordination with CBP, will establish and post procedures for the Joint Intake Center Joint Intake Center (JIC) to ensure effective communication between LEP persons and agents/duty officers staffing the JIC.

Secure Communities: Developing a short briefing video, in coordination with CRCL, for State and local law enforcement programs in jurisdictions in which Secure Communities has been activated, including information about the Federal requirements that language services be provided for limited English proficient individuals.

Detention:

- Notifying detention facilities of their existing LEP obligations under detention standards and the Executive Order.
- Encouraging detention facilities to put "I Speak" materials in detainee handbooks and requiring that they be posted in the facilities.
- Translating the ICE Detainee Handbook into multiple languages
- Through ERO, implementing a plan and procedures for documenting the languages spoken by ICE detainees to help ensure effective communication in detention.
- Encouraging detention facilities to note each detainee's language in his or her detention folder.

- Implementing changes to the book-in process so that ICE officers can more easily determine the language spoken by LEP detainees and note that language in ICE automated records. This commitment will require changes to the booking module, in the ENFORCE database. The ENFORCE database and associated forms will also be changed so that information about the languages spoken by LEP detainees can be communicated to the detention facilities when detained aliens are transferred there.
- Developing material for IGSAs on how to access interpretation services, and guidance on using the interpreter line.
- Ensuring availability of the Know Your Rights video being developed by the ABA in Spanish and English to all detention facilities and develop a plan with the ABA and CRCL on providing additional translations.

## **7. DHS Office of Public Affairs**

The Office of Public Affairs (OPA) coordinates the public affairs activities of all of the Department's Components, and serves as the Federal government's lead public information office during a national emergency or disaster. OPA is the primary point of contact for news media, organizations and the general public seeking information about Department of Homeland Security's programs, policies, procedures, statistics, and services. The Office assists the Secretary on all public affairs, as well as strategic and internal communications matters.

### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

The following are examples of ongoing activities within DHS OPA to provide meaningful access for LEP persons.

The Press Office works with DHS Components that have bilingual employees to provide television, radio, and phone interviews, particularly in Spanish, to educate the public about Department messages, policies, and programs.

Bilingual staffers from Component Offices of Public Affairs similarly supplement and enhance outreach efforts.

OPA translates public documents that contain vital information for members of the public regarding DHS programs and policies. Numerous materials have been identified, translated into Spanish and made available on the Department's public website at <http://www.dhs.gov/ynews/espanol/>.

Occasionally DHS OPA will produce marketing or messaging campaign materials (in Spanish and other languages).

OPA has made available translations of "If You See Something, Say Something" campaign materials to its state, local, and private sector partners. This key program is designed to raise public awareness of indicators of terrorism and violent crime and emphasize the importance of reporting suspicious activity to the proper authorities. Samples of various posters, designed for airports, train systems, small towns, and urban areas are available at:

(b)(7)(E)

OPA routinely interacts with ethnic media, NGOs and international counterparts to disseminate messages and information.

Spanish-speaking DHS officials participate in interviews with the media and DHS related conferences to provide information or updates about different programs, operations, and policies affecting the LEP community. Examples include immigration policies and emergency preparedness.

### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

OPA is committed to increasing access to LEP persons to information about DHS programs and policies. Planned activities include:

Entering into a contract for interpretation and translation services, as needed.

Continuing to increase the availability of translated “If You See Something Say Something” materials.

Developing a plan for urgent translation of materials distributed under the National Terrorism Advisory System into appropriate languages.

Prioritizing the translation of additional documents into additional languages, including materials about DHS activities and programs provided to the public through the DHS web site and at public events.

Providing training on language access responsibilities and institute protocols for staff when LEP individuals seek assistance from Component OPAs.

Documenting information regarding translation services and bilingual staff protocols.

Formalizing a process and procedures for identifying language needs during outreach events, especially those dealing with disaster preparedness and response.

Continuing to reach out to foreign language media as part of the Department’s international outreach.

## **8. Transportation Security Administration**

The Transportation Security Administration (TSA) protects the Nation's transportation systems to ensure freedom of movement for people and commerce. TSA interacts with the traveling public through its Transportation Security Officers (TSOs) and Behavior Detection Officers (BDOs) at the security checkpoints in the airports as part of the Office of Security Operations (OSO); through the Federal Air Marshals (FAMs) missions and investigations; through the Transportation Worker Identification Card (TWIC) program at the Nation's ports; through joint programs with local law enforcement, Visible Intermodal Protection Response (VIPR); and through the customer service functions of the TSA Contact Center (TCC), the Office of Strategic Communication and Public Affairs (OSC&PA), the Traveler Redress Inquiry Program (TRIP), the TSA Claims Management Office, and the TSA Office of Civil Rights and Liberties (OCRL).

### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

The following are examples of ongoing activities within TSA to provide meaningful access for LEP persons.

Through surveys in 2006 and 2008, TSA has identified the eight languages most frequently encountered at airport checkpoints: Arabic, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi, and Spanish. TSA's signs are largely available in those eight languages. Each airport can select the appropriate signs in the appropriate languages for public posting.

TSA has translated and posted a number of important documents.

- For example, 3-1-1 signage translations are available at <http://www.tsa.gov/travelers/airtravel/assistant/translations.shtm>.
- TSA currently meets its translation needs through professional contract services to translate signage, website information, programmatic information (for the TWIC program and OCRL), and passenger advisements (through OSO and TSA OCRL).
- TSA is continually assessing what documents, signs, and advisements are important and are a priority to be translated.
- OCRL and OSO are in the process of translating advisements given to the public regarding the standard and resolution pat-downs. This will be made available, first in a pilot, at the checkpoints to assist in communicating the advisements to LEP individuals in the core languages of Arabic, French, German, Japanese, Korean, Mandarin, Punjabi, and Spanish.

The TWIC Program and the TSA Contact Center (TCC) provide interpreter services through bilingual contract staff. The TWIC Program advises applicants of language access availability through its website and literature. For example, the TWIC Disclosure and Certification form is available at (D)(7)(E) in 13 languages.

TSA has made the Rosetta Stone language teaching program available for all TSA employees to access and use for free on its Online Learning Center (OLC).

TSA consulted with stakeholders about language access needs at the Annual TSA Coalition Meeting in September 2011 and will continue outreach. TSA intends to use the connections with coalition partners to assist in development and distribution of key documents in numerous languages for LEP populations.

## **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

In addition to developing its LEP plan in FY 2012, TSA is committed to undertaking a number of activities to increase access for LEP persons to TSA programs and services. These activities include:

If resources permit, TSA OCRL intends to increase the availability of translated documents. TSA OCRL will explore the development of non-verbal signage for the five most important instructions while going through airport security (e.g. remove shoes, liquids, laptop; have passport ready, etc.).

TSA OCRL will utilize telephonic interpreter services to accept complaints from LEP individuals who are unable to communicate those complaints in writing.

TSA will conduct additional outreach to LEP communities to better understand needs and issues.

TSA's FY 2012 LEP plan will include:

- A periodic survey of the airports of frequently encountered languages.
- A procedure for staff when LEP individuals are encountered.
- Training on language access responsibilities.
- Quality assurance requirements for TSA's translation contracts.

TSA will work with CRCL on ways to identify language needs and for TSA to provide the language assistance. For encounters with individuals undergoing secondary screening, TSA OCRL will consider developing instructions in the languages most frequently encountered.

## **9. U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services**

U.S. Citizenship and Immigration Services (USCIS) is the government agency that adjudicates immigration and citizenship benefits. USCIS also promotes awareness and understanding of citizenship, ensures the integrity of our immigration system, and provides accurate and useful information to its customers.

### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

The following are examples of ongoing efforts within USCIS to provide meaningful access to persons with limited English proficiency.

#### **Customer Service Directorate (CSD)**

USCIS's Customer Service Directorate (CSD) provides nationwide assistance, by telephone, to customers calling from within the United States about immigration services and benefits. The National Customer Service Center (NCSC) provides live and automated assistance in English and Spanish.

CSD conducts monthly surveys on its customer's language needs. Customers may include an applicant, attorney/ representative, or a member of the general public. The survey results document the primary languages spoken by customers calling the NCSC. Survey results for the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of FY 2011 indicate that its customers spoke the following languages (in order of highest usage): English, Spanish, "Other," Arabic, Chinese, Russian, Tagalog, French, Hindi, German, and Portuguese.

Customers also have the option to make on-line appointments to visit their local USCIS office. This free on-line program for making an appointment is called InfoPass. InfoPass is available in 12 languages: English, Spanish, Creole, Vietnamese, Chinese, Tagalog, Russian, Portuguese, French, Korean, Polish, and Arabic. A survey of the use of InfoPass showed that during the 3<sup>rd</sup> quarter of FY 2011, 92% of customers chose to use English, 5% chose Spanish, and the remaining (~2.5%) chose one of the other offered languages when scheduling appointments.

Customers who call the NCSC toll-free assistance number are immediately informed that information is available in English and Spanish. NCSC has appropriate bilingual staff available at all levels of call-support to answer telephonic inquiries in English and Spanish.

When recruiting staff, CSD indicates the need for proficient Spanish-speaking bilingual employees. The duty to provide bilingual services is part of these employees' regular job duties. Although CSD hires employees who are bilingual in languages other than Spanish, at this time, calls are not routed to employees based on any other language. This is due to the requirement that calls must be monitored in the language spoken by the Customer Service Representative and currently, there are no monitors for languages other than Spanish.

CSD requires that each bilingual employee attend a 3 to 6 week long formal training applicable to their job duties; bilingual employees are trained in Spanish and English. All bilingual employees have their calls monitored in Spanish and English to ensure they are providing superior customer service in each language that they speak.

CSD maintains a contract with a certified translator company to provide written language services, as needed. This language contractor supports other program offices' and directorates' requests for translated written materials, including brochures, educational materials, and issue-awareness posters.

CSD continues to determine additional documents that should be translated based on feedback from surveys, internal assessment, and other agency components.

### **Office of Communications**

The Office of Communications uses traditional and social media outlets to inform the public about USCIS operations and developments.

The Office of Communications disseminates materials such as press releases and fact sheets to foreign-language media outlets, primarily in Spanish. Most of these products are translated in-house by bilingual USCIS staff; quality control processes ensure accuracy. There is also a mechanism to contract out for document translation where in-house resources are insufficient.

The Office of Communications developed and maintains the [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) website, where many application instructions, fact sheets, videos, and other products are available in different languages. These are translated into other languages based on need and relevance to particular communities.

To reach the Spanish-speaking public, the Office of Communications uses the main Spanish media outlets and manages a Spanish-language website, *USCIS en Español*: [www.uscis.gov/espanol](http://www.uscis.gov/espanol). This site is not an exact copy of the English site, but maintains content relevant to the Spanish-speaking audience.

Social media channels are also used to carry messages in other languages. The USCIS Twitter channel regularly sends tweets in Spanish and the YouTube channel hosts videos in several languages.

### **Office of Public Engagement**

The Office of Public Engagement (OPE) coordinates and directs USCIS-wide dialogue with external stakeholders. OPE actively collaborates with and seeks feedback from stakeholders to inform USCIS policies, priorities, and organizational performance reviews. OPE facilitates open and transparent communication between USCIS, external stakeholders, and the customers they represent by sharing feedback, working with USCIS leadership, coordinating follow-up, and reporting back to stakeholders. The Office also works closely with other USCIS offices to support the implementation of highly visible outreach programs and public education initiatives.

OPE has conducted several engagement sessions (*Enlace*) entirely in Spanish to meet the needs of the Spanish-speaking customer base and their requests for information on specific topics and is planning Mandarin and Arabic language engagements in 2012.

OPE uses call-in statistics from the USCIS Customer Service Directorate Survey as well as open-source information to correlate language and customer interest for developing targeted multilingual outreach events.

OPE uses a contractor and USCIS employees to translate material specifically for the Unauthorized Practice of Immigration Law (UPIL) initiative, including educational brochures, posters, and public service announcement scripts. The print materials are available in 14 languages, and the pre-recorded audio public service announcements for the UPIL initiative are available in English and Spanish. All translated material is available online. In addition, brochures on the immigration options available to victims of human trafficking, domestic violence and other crimes are available in Spanish, Russian, and Chinese.

OPE also contributes content to the Spanish language version of USCIS.gov, *USCIS en Español*, [www.uscis.gov/espanol](http://www.uscis.gov/espanol).

### **Office of Policy and Strategy**

The Office of Policy and Strategy (OP&S) provides policy and strategic recommendations to the Director of USCIS on all immigration matters. It also oversees a broad program of immigration policy research and evaluation to facilitate informed decision making and program direction.

OP&S is examining the LEP-related activities and services that USCIS provides to its external customers (foreign nationals) and will be working with other USCIS offices in developing the agency's LEP Plan during 2012.

### **Office of Citizenship**

The USCIS Office of Citizenship (OoC) is a public education and outreach office responsible for promoting instruction and training on citizenship rights and responsibilities. This includes using the immigration process to provide immigrants with important information regarding citizenship and naturalization eligibility requirements. OoC also conducts training workshops on the naturalization test and eligibility requirements for adult educators, volunteers, and other organizations that serve immigrants. Through a variety of outreach activities, OoC raises awareness about available materials and training opportunities. Since FY 2009, OoC has received appropriations from Congress to provide competitive grant funding opportunities designed to help prepare permanent residents for citizenship and promote immigrant integration in the United States.

Speaking, reading, writing, and understanding English are requirements to become a naturalized citizen. Accordingly, OoC's citizenship preparation materials are primarily developed in English. However, OoC seeks to engage immigrants at all stages of the immigration process, so materials for new permanent residents are available at [www.uscis.gov/newimmigrants](http://www.uscis.gov/newimmigrants) in English and 13 additional languages. The decision to provide translated materials is determined based on immigration flow, demonstrated community need, and department/agency guidance.

OoC regularly engages ethnic media and collaborates with nongovernmental organizations that work with LEP persons.

All new permanent residents, upon receiving Form I-551 (Permanent Resident Card), are provided information on how to obtain the publication, *Welcome to the United States: A Guide for New Immigrants* in English and 13 additional languages: Arabic, Chinese, French,

Haitian Creole, Korean, Polish, Portuguese, Russian, Somali, Spanish, Tagalog, Urdu, and Vietnamese.

OoC works with outside language contractors for its translation services.

OoC provides translations of the 100 civics questions and answers for the naturalization test in Spanish, Chinese, Tagalog, and Vietnamese. OoC also provides translated subtitles for several educational videos at [www.uscis.gov/citizenship](http://www.uscis.gov/citizenship), including a short film on the USCIS naturalization interview and test.

In addition, OoC provides a “Naturalization Resources in Spanish” section on its online Citizenship Resource Center, along with a subtitled video on civics with Chinese captions.

In FY 2010, OoC initiated the Citizenship Public Education and Awareness Initiative to publicize the availability of USCIS educational products and resources among permanent residents and immigrant-serving organizations. This initiative features print, radio, and digital advertisements in English, Spanish, Mandarin, and Vietnamese, which are available at [www.uscis.gov/citizenshipawareness](http://www.uscis.gov/citizenshipawareness).

OoC also contributes citizenship and naturalization content to the Spanish language version of USCIS.gov, USCIS en Español [www.uscis.gov/espanol](http://www.uscis.gov/espanol).

### **Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations Directorate – Refugee Affairs Division**

The Refugee Affairs Division (RAD) is responsible for providing the humanitarian benefit of refugee resettlement to applicants in need of protection throughout the world while diligently protecting the U.S. homeland through careful national security screening.

The vast majority of RAD’s interactions with applicants occur outside the United States with individuals who do not speak English. The more commonly used languages include Arabic, Karen Dialects, Chin Dialects, Nepali, Somali, and Spanish.

Applicants are able to communicate with RAD staff through interpreters provided by the Resettlement Support Centers (formerly known as Overseas Processing Entities) under a cooperative agreement with the Department of State. USCIS employs bilingual Spanish-speaking refugee officers to conduct protection screening interviews for migrants at sea and refugee interviews conducted in Latin America and the Caribbean.

Document translations are submitted by the applicant or by interpreters provided by Resettlement Support Centers under cooperative agreement with the Department of State.

### **Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations Directorate – Asylum Division**

The mission of the Asylum Division encompasses the management of four main programs:

1. Affirmative asylum, which permits individuals already in the United States to request asylum if they are unable or unwilling to return to their country of origin due to past persecution or a well-founded fear of persecution;
2. Suspension of deportation or cancellation of removal under the Nicaraguan Adjustment and Central American Relief Act (NACARA 203);
3. Credible Fear screenings for individuals placed into expedited removal proceedings and who request asylum or indicate a fear of return to their country of origin; and

4. Reasonable Fear screenings for certain individuals subject to administrative removal or reinstatement of a prior removal order.

The Asylum Division has blanket purchase agreements with two interpreter services vendors to provide interpreter services for asylum-related screenings.

By regulation, asylum applicants are required to provide their own interpreters at their scheduled affirmative asylum interviews. The Asylum Division staff uses a telephonic interpreter to monitor the interpretation at all affirmative asylum interviews with an interpreter.

The Asylum Division uses bilingual staff and family members, friends, or other persons associated with the LEP person, provided that the person interpreting is at least 18 years of age and fluent in both the native language and English. The applicant's attorney or representative cannot serve as the interpreter. A representative of the applicant's country of nationality or last habitual residence cannot serve as the interpreter.

The Asylum Division evaluates legal requirements, agency policy, available funding, and customer service needs to determine which programs are prioritized for interpreter services.

The public is apprised of the availability of translated documents and other information and resources via public website and regularly-scheduled meetings with nongovernmental organization representatives.

The Asylum Division has translated the following documents for CBP, ICE, and Asylum Officers to distribute during relevant credible fear and reasonable fear orientation procedures:

- An information sheet about the Credible Fear interview process (Form M-444) in Albanian, Arabic, French, Haitian Creole, Mandarin, Portuguese, Russian, Serbo-Croatian Cyrillic, Serbo-Croatian Latin, Somali, and Spanish.
- An information sheet for Credible Fear applicants regarding parole eligibility and the parole process translated into Amharic, Arabic, Chinese, Haitian Creole, French, Somali, Spanish, and Tigrinya.
- An information sheet about the Reasonable Fear interview process (Form M-488) in Spanish.

For affirmative asylum cases, the Asylum Division issues *Pick-Up Notices* and *Decision Letters* translated into Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Chinese, French, Haitian Creole, Indonesian, Nepalese, Russian, and Spanish.

Information regarding benefits adjudicated by the Asylum Division is included on the USCIS website in both English and Spanish at [www.uscis.gov/asylum](http://www.uscis.gov/asylum). Signs and posters are provided in public access locations in languages other than English. Languages vary according to location and local population.

An *Information Guide for Prospective Asylum Applicants* is available in English, Amharic, Arabic, Armenian, Chinese, Haitian Creole, French, Indonesian, Nepali, Russian, and Spanish in the [Resources](#) section of the Asylum web page at [www.uscis.gov/asylum](http://www.uscis.gov/asylum).

## **Refugee, Asylum, and International Operations Directorate – International Operations**

The International Operations Division (IO) has 28 international field offices around the world. Officers in these international offices play a critical role in extending immigration benefits to

eligible individuals, exercising vigilance in matters of fraud detection and national security, supporting the mission of USCIS in Securing America's Promise, and providing technical expertise on immigration-related matters for both U.S. and foreign government components.

Approximately 40% of the entire International Operations staff is foreign nationals, who are at least bilingual. These employees are fluent in both English and their native language and provide an invaluable service in providing translation and interpreter services.

Approximately 50% of IO overseas customer base is LEP. The most common languages spoken by these customers are Spanish, Mandarin, Fuzhou, Haitian Creole, and German.

Overseas offices are all staffed with people with native language capability; however, some applicants also bring interpreters with them to help interpret during interviews, particularly if they speak a language not spoken by USCIS staff (for example, Nepali in India).

## **Field Operations**

USCIS domestic field offices handle scheduled interviews on non-asylum related applications. Field offices also provide limited information and customer services that supplement the information provided by the National Customer Service Center (NCSC) telephone line and [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

Field Operations conducted an informal survey that revealed that among the customers who required an interpreter, the most common language spoken by these customers were Spanish, Chinese, Vietnamese, Arabic, Russian, Haitian Creole, Korean, Punjabi, and Urdu. (These responses are from all customers and not specifically LEP persons.)

Bilingual staff, contractors, and other DHS offices and other federal resources provide support at field offices' information counters in languages other than English, as needed. Applicants may bring an interpreter with them to field offices. Receipt notices for USCIS applications currently instruct applicants to bring their own interpreters.

Field Operations uses the translated documents provided by the Office of Public Engagement, the Office of Communications, and the resources of the Customer Service Directorate to support services to LEP individuals within the parameters of interviewing applicants and responding to InfoPass appointments.

## **Service Center Operations**

USCIS Service Centers are located in Vermont, Texas, Nebraska, and California. Service Center employees have little interaction with customers, aside from public engagement sessions that are facilitated through the Office of Public Engagement. Outreach activities are generally conducted with English-speaking attorneys and individuals representing community based organizations.

## **Verification Division**

USCIS's Verification Division maintains the E-Verify and SAVE systems that are used to verify work authorization and immigration status. E-Verify is an Internet-based system that allows businesses to determine the eligibility of their employees to work in the United States. E-Verify compares the information an employee provides on Form I-9, Employment Eligibility

Verification, against government records from the Social Security Administration (SSA) and the Department of Homeland Security (DHS).

The E-Verify web page, [www.uscis.gov/everify](http://www.uscis.gov/everify), has a special section for employees. The employee section provides information on rights and responsibilities, how to resolve a tentative non-confirmation and how to report violations. The web site for employee information includes a [Foreign Language Resources](#) section.

In the [Foreign Language Resources](#) section of the E-Verify web page, [www.uscis.gov/everify](http://www.uscis.gov/everify), Verification provides the brochure, "You Should Know Your Rights and Responsibilities under E-Verify" in nine languages: Chinese, Creole, English, French, Korean, Russian, Spanish, Tagalog and Vietnamese. It also provides translations of letters and notices that a customer may receive from the DHS or SSA in nine languages.

Verification disseminates an educational video on Employee Rights and Responsibilities in English and Spanish. Videos are available for free to the public upon request, disseminated at all outreach events, and available in the [Foreign Language Resources](#) section of the E-Verify web page.

The Form I-9 is available in both English and Spanish at <http://www.uscis.gov/i-9>.

Self Check is a service of E-Verify that allows individuals to check their employment eligibility in the United States. Self Check was launched in Spanish on August 15, 2011.

The Systematic Alien Verification for Entitlements (SAVE) Program is an intergovernmental initiative designed to aid benefit-granting agencies in determining an applicant's immigration status.

SAVE provides information to benefit applicants regarding applying for benefits and correcting their records in sixteen languages, including: Arabic, Creole, German, Italian, Korean, Portuguese, Chinese (Simplified and Traditional), Spanish, Urdu, French, Hindi, Japanese, Polish, Russian, Tagalog, Guajarati and Vietnamese. This information can be found in the [Multilingual Resources for Benefit Applicants](#) section of the SAVE web page.

The Verification Division conducts outreach and customer service operations.

Customer Contact Operations (CCO) currently utilizes a contract to provide interpretation services. The contractor specializes in 22 languages, and the most commonly used is Spanish.

The Verification Division maintains a telephonic help line where employees and employers may ask questions. The Interactive Voice Response (IVR) system is currently offered in English and Spanish for employees.

To promote understanding and participation in the E-Verify and Self Check programs among Spanish-speaking communities, USCIS ran newspaper and radio advertisements in Spanish-language newspapers in Atlanta, Raleigh, Miami, Orlando, Los Angeles, New York, El Paso and Houston.

## **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

In addition to completing its LEP plan in FY 2012, USCIS is committed to undertaking a number of activities to increase access to LEP persons to USCIS programs and services. These activities include:

### **Customer Service Directorate**

The Customer Service Directorate will collect information on requested language assistance.

The Customer Service Directorate will publicly post the Spanish scripts used by bilingual Call Center staff to answer customer inquiries at [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

### **The Office of Communications**

The Office of Communications will maintain the Spanish website [www.uscis.gov/espanol](http://www.uscis.gov/espanol), and will aim to increase the translated content of the website.

The Office of Communications will aim to expand media outreach efforts beyond English and Spanish-language media to communities in other languages, primarily Chinese.

### **Office of Public Engagement**

The Office of Public Engagement will aim to provide greater resources to conduct additional engagement sessions in Spanish and to analyze whether similar sessions can be conducted in other languages.

In February 2012, the Office of Public Engagement will conduct a national engagement in Mandarin on citizenship. The Office will work with stakeholder organizations and Chinese-language media to increase awareness of this event and Chinese-language materials that are available on [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov).

The Office of Public Engagement will continue to develop outreach materials, and will continue to translate these materials into Spanish and other languages.

### **Office of Policy and Strategy**

USCIS will determine the feasibility of conducting a cross-office language access needs assessment.

USCIS will determine the feasibility of conducting a formal study on the costs of providing interpreters during the course of interviews for immigration benefits.

### **Office of Citizenship**

The Office of Citizenship plans to expand the number of training and professional development opportunities it provides to adult educators, volunteers, and other immigrant-serving organizations.

## **RAIO – Asylum Division**

The Asylum Division intends to continue to translate and post select forms and informational documents on [www.uscis.gov](http://www.uscis.gov) and [www.uscis.gov/humanitarian](http://www.uscis.gov/humanitarian).

The Asylum Division intends to pilot customer satisfaction surveys in FY12 and intends to have these surveys translated, depending on customer need and available resources.

## **RAIO – International Operations**

International Operations may look into utilizing existing bilingual capabilities by providing multilingual information through posting on embassy or State Department websites.

## **Field Operations**

USCIS is analyzing its current practices in the Field Operations and seeks to learn from the best practices of other offices and directorates that have experienced success in providing meaningful access to LEP customers.

USCIS is exploring translating instructions for frequently used forms.

## **Verification Division**

Starting in FY 2012 and into FY 2013, E-Verify plans to provide information in 19 additional languages: Arabic, Armenian, Bengali, Carolinian (CNMI), Chamorro (CNMI), French, German, Gujarati, Hindi, Hmong, Italian, Laotian, Mon-Khmer/Cambodian, Persian, Portuguese, Serbo-Croatian, Somali, Thai, and Urdu.

The Verification Division will begin researching providing notices in Native American languages.

The Verification Division will look into translating SAVE documents, such as the agency participation poster, benefit applicant brochure, and postcard into 18 languages.

The Verification Division will aim to provide additional SAVE documents in Spanish, including the SAVE program and user guides, SAVE FAQs, and SAVE Training Course.

At the end of FY 2011, the Verification Division acquired an interpretation contract to expand interpretation services to more than 50 languages, including the top 20 most commonly spoken languages in the United States.

The Verification Division will expand the employer helpdesk line to provide services in Spanish.

The Verification Division aims to expand its use of social media tools such as Twitter, and Government Delivery to provide information in Spanish.

## **10. U.S. Coast Guard**

The U.S. Coast Guard (USCG) is one of the five military services that make up the Armed Forces of the United States and the only military organization within the Department of Homeland Security. The Coast Guard protects important interests of the United States—the personal safety and security of our population; the marine transportation system and critical infrastructure; our natural and economic resources; and the territorial integrity of our nation—from both internal and external threats.

### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

The following are examples of ongoing activities within the USCG to provide meaningful access for LEP individuals:

The Coast Guard has identified seven languages (other than English) of strategic importance to its missions: Spanish, Haitian Creole, Russian, Vietnamese, Mandarin, Japanese, and Korean. Units that routinely deploy to the Caribbean, Central and South America and the Far East have a consistent need for members who speak these languages. Some examples of circumstances in which the Coast Guard might encounter speakers of these languages include:

Units conducting drug interdiction, migrant interdiction, search and rescue, and other missions in the Gulf of Mexico, Caribbean Sea, and waters off the southwest United States routinely encounter Spanish speakers.

Following Hurricane Katrina, the Coast Guard activated a Reservist to serve as an interpreter during meetings with Vietnamese vessel owners, alleviating concerns about safety issues, vessel recovery, and hazardous materials remediation.

During the visit of the Coast Guard cutter CGC DALLAS to Georgia, Ukraine, and Bulgaria, members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary Interpreter Corps deployed to act as certified Russian/Ukrainian interpreters. As of 2010, the Coast Guard Auxiliary has also provided linguistic support to the following cutters: ACUSHNET, ALERT, ALEX HALEY, CHASE, AQUIDNECK, BOUTWELL, DALLAS, DEPENDABLE, JARVIS, HAMILTON, MADRONA, MUNRO, SPENCER, STORIS, and MOHAWK.

The First Coast Guard District Command Center in Boston, Massachusetts directed search and rescue efforts to assist a Portuguese fishing vessel off the coast of New England.

The North Pacific Coast Guard Forum held a multi-mission Exercise in Honolulu, Hawaii to focus on international oil spill response. During the exercise, members of the Coast Guard Auxiliary served as Korean, Russian, Japanese, and Chinese interpreters.

The Coast Guard offers interpretation services at units where an operational requirement such as responding to a search and rescue case with a non-English speaker exists.

The Coast Guard assigns interpreters as a collateral duty function at such units. These units may designate a number of interpreters to certain qualification levels based on the Coast Guard Foreign Language Program guidance. Interpreters must meet criteria outlined in the Coast Guard Foreign Language Program, including passing the Defense Language Proficiency Test and receiving an endorsement by the command, and receive foreign language proficiency pay. The National Maritime Center, which issues U.S. merchant

mariner credentials, maintains a Spanish/English capability in its Customer Service Center which receives about 1,000 calls every workday. This service is capable of assisting Spanish speaking mariners with their applications and other related credentialing services via live telephone, voicemail, email and fax. .

Interpretation primarily utilizes bilingual/multilingual staff members and certified Coast Guard Auxiliary interpreters.

Translated documents and announcements are also promulgated, particularly in Spanish:

The Coast Guard posts storm and hurricane forecasts and warnings for boaters and coastal residents at <http://www.uscg.mil/news/stormcenter/>. Once on the site, users may click on the "En Espanol" tab, in the upper left hand corner of the page, to see all text and boater advisories in Spanish.

The Coast Guard's National Pollution Funds Center (NPFC) has translated versions of the claimant's guide and optional Oil Spill Liability Trust Fund claim form in Khmer, Vietnamese and Spanish. The NPFC also employs a contract interpretation company to provide primary service to LEP customers, and also utilizes language skills of bilingual staff members who voluntarily serve as interpreters. The NPFC is currently examining GSA schedules to determine the availability of real-time oral language services for languages that are not available through use of current staff.

The Coast Guard NPFC has established a relationship with and used the National Virtual Translation Center (NVTC) to assist with written translations.

The Coast Guard NPFC apprises the public of the availability of translated documents and interpreter services through information on the unit website and via a 1-800 number.

The Coast Guard has conducted media interviews in Spanish in Florida and Puerto Rico.

## **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

In addition to completing its LEP plan for FY 2012, the Coast Guard will continue considering avenues to improve access for LEP persons to its programs and services. The Coast Guard intends to:

Continue to consult with internal and external stakeholders to assess needs and issues.

Continue to develop LEP materials for public access on the Coast Guard website.

Continue to develop and deliver LEP education briefings and information for internal and external stakeholders and the general public about language services and LEP mandates. This includes language service protocols for all Coast Guard personnel and the use of tools such as "I Speak" materials.

Continue to identify documents and forms for translation into languages which support mission accomplishment and services provided.

## **11. U.S. Secret Service**

The United States Secret Service (USSS) is a federal law enforcement agency mandated by Congress to carry out dual missions: protection of national and visiting foreign leaders, and criminal investigations.

### **CURRENT LANGUAGE ACCESS ACTIVITIES**

The following are examples of ongoing activities within USSS to provide meaningful access for LEP persons.

USSS provides interpretive services when needed:

- Field components making contact with LEP individuals either utilize bilingual personnel in their office or arrange to utilize vendor services through headquarters.
- The USSS Training Center and USSS Headquarters maintain a list of USSS employees with assessed verbal foreign language proficiency who may be utilized by field components for impromptu communication with LEP individuals.
- All interpretation and translation needs that pertain to criminal investigations are accomplished through vendor services and are managed by USSS HQ.
- Formal requests for translation/interpretation are documented by USSS HQ. Quality assurance is accomplished via informal feedback from the requestor.
- Foreign language oral proficiency testing is facilitated on an individual basis to determine and reward bilingual competency. Employees have access to foreign language teaching software.

USSS provides key documents in multiple languages:

- Counterfeit awareness documents are published in 33 languages.
- A number of public service documents have been translated into multiple languages and are typically distributed upon request as part of specific field component protocols.
- Specific requests for non-English literature are referred to the appropriate office. USSS prioritizes translation of important documents, as needed.

### **ADDITIONAL ACTIVITIES PLANNED**

In addition to completing its LEP plan in FY 2012, USSS is committed to undertaking a number of activities to increase access for LEP persons to USSS programs and services. These activities include:

Training staff on language access responsibilities.

Instituting a protocol for staff when LEP individuals are encountered.

The I Speak “Language Identification guide” will be made available to all offices via the USSS intranet to assist field agents in identifying languages for translation/interpretation.

Posting of translated documents on the public website, [www.secretservice.gov](http://www.secretservice.gov)

Creating best LEP practices training for our bilingual staff who interact with LEP public to ensure a standardized approach.